

REMARKS

At the time of the Office Action dated August 12, 2003, claims 1-20 were pending in this application. Of those claims, claims 1-14 have been rejected and claims 19 and 20 have been withdrawn from consideration pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.142(b). Applicants acknowledge, with appreciation, the Examiner's allowance of claims 15-18. Withdrawn claims 19 and 20 have been cancelled.

In the sixth enumerated paragraph of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5), requiring depiction of reference sign 31 mentioned in the description on page 6, lines 9-18. By this amendment, the paragraph including reference sign 31 has been deleted, and as such, the Examiner's objection is moot. Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that the imposed objection to the drawings has been overcome and, hence, solicits withdrawal thereof.

In the seventh enumerated paragraph of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5), because the drawings including reference numerals 16, 7, 11, and A, which were not described in the specification. In response, it is proposed to amend Figs. 1 and 2 to delete these reference numerals from the drawings. Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that the imposed objection to the drawings has been overcome and, hence, solicits withdrawal thereof.

In the eighth enumerated paragraph of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the paragraph in the specification starting on page 6, line 9 through page 6, line 18. By this amendment, the paragraph referred to by the Examiner has been deleted. Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that the imposed objection to the specification has been overcome and, hence, solicits withdrawal thereof.

Claims 1-14 are separately rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-14 of U.S. Patent No. 6,325,855 (hereinafter the '855 Patent) and claims 1-28 of U.S. Patent No. 6,478,877 (hereinafter the '877 Patent)

This rejection is traversed. Applicants submit herewith a Terminal Disclaimer with respect to the '855 Patent and the '877 Patent, thereby overcoming the imposed rejections on the ground of obviousness-type double patenting. Applicants, therefore, respectfully solicit withdrawal of the imposed rejection of claims 1-14.

Claims 1-14 are separately and provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-114 of copending U.S. Application No. 09/884,944 (hereinafter the '944 Application) and claims 1-53 of copending U.S. Application No. 09/993,614 (hereinafter the '614 Application)

This rejection is traversed. Applicants submit herewith a Terminal Disclaimer with respect to the 944 Application and the '614 Application, thereby overcoming the imposed rejections on the ground of obviousness-type double patenting. Applicants, therefore, respectfully solicit withdrawal of the imposed rejection of claims 1-14.

Applicants have made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. However, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. Accordingly, and in view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants hereby respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417, and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

MCDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY



Scott D. Paul
Registration No. 42,984

600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096
(202) 756-8000 SDP:kap
Date: August 28, 2003
Facsimile: (202) 756-8087